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Patentanmeldung Nr. Patent application No. Demande de brevet n°

03290761.0

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Bezeichnung der Erfindung/Title of the invention/Titre de l'invention:

(Falls die Bezeichnung der Erfindung nicht angegeben ist, siehe Beschreibung.

If no title is shown please refer to the description.

Si aucun titre n'est indiqué se referer à la description.)

Electronic mail system apparatus and removable storage means suitable for such a system

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ELECTRONIC MAIL SYSTEM, APPARATUS AND REMOVABLE STORAGE MEANS SUITABLE  
FOR SUCH A SYSTEM.

The present invention relates to an electronic mail system comprising at least an apparatus having a device to be connected to an electronic mail service.

5 This apparatus finds many applications, notably for delighting the users who are desirous to maintain a contact with their E-mail.

Such an apparatus is disclosed in the Japanese patent document JP 200273493. This known apparatus rather concerns the music players having E-mail facilities.

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The present invention proposes a system of the mentioned type, which provides advantages in the handling of the mail without using complicate mail apparatus.

An electronic mail system according to the invention comprises, at least:

- 15 - an apparatus having a device to be connected to an electronic mail service, apparatus comprising:
- a receptacle for receiving a removable data storing means
  - writing/reading means for reading and/or writing storing means
  - connecting means for a connection to a mail service.
  - mail managing means for managing mail,
- 20 system further comprising
- a removable data storing means

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The removable storing means brings, at least, the facility for the managing of the mail. By this measure, the mail handling can be executed in various locations by apparatus, which are not of the same type. The connecting means can even be omitted in these other apparatus. The user can take knowledge of his mail and is able to write or to record mails, which will be sent in another time with an adequate apparatus.

The invention proposes also an apparatus, which is convenient for such a mail system and a removable data storing means suitable for the system.

These and other aspects of the invention are apparent from and will be elucidated, by way of non-limitative example, with reference to the embodiment(s) described hereinafter.

Fig. 1 shows an electronic mail system in accordance with the invention.

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Fig. 2 shows the structure of the system shown in Fig.1.

Fig. 3 shows another embodiment of an electronic system in accordance with the invention.

Fig. 1 shows a mail system having an apparatus 1, in which a removable data carrier 5, notably an optical disc, can be placed. In a preferred embodiment this optical disc is a SFFO one (Small Form Factor Optical disc). This apparatus comprises means for a connection to the web network 10. This connection is provided with a link 12, for instance a telephonic line to an access Internet service 15, which is necessary for the access to the web 10. A mail server 18 can be contacted for the purpose to handle the mail of the user.

15 The apparatus, in this example, cooperates with an usual TV apparatus 20 to which it is connected by a cable 22. A remote control device 25 carries out the control of the apparatus 1. The apparatus 1 is of a type, which allows a connection to an Email service. For this connection, a dedicate command is provided. This command can be established by a permanent command or can be programmed by a command file contained in the removable

20 data carrier 5. The location of this file is shown by the reference 29. This command file is launched when the apparatus recognizes it, so that one of the buttons of the remote command 25 is dedicated to the function: 'send this email'. The apparatus may have other function that Mail handling, another function may be a DVD recorder one.

The Fig.2 shows a structure of the apparatus 1. It is formed from a

25 microprocessor unit 40, in which the usual elements are provided: memory for data, memory for program lines and so on. This unit 40 is the core of the apparatus and handles all the working of the apparatus. The reference 42 indicates the drive for a removable data storing means constituted by an optical disc. This drive 42 constitutes a receptacle for the optical drive. The apparatus comprises some interface circuits: a display circuit 44 for a

30 connection to the TV apparatus 20 via the cable 22, a modem device 46 for the connection to the access Internet service 15 which permits to access the mail server 18 and Infrared interface circuit 50 for receiving the commands from the remote control device 25.

The Fig.3 shows another embodiment of the invention, the apparatus comprises other interface circuits for enabling a voice dialogue. The TV apparatus is replaced with a

35 loud speaker 60. The remote control device is no more needed. The voice of the user is

sufficient to give orders to the apparatus. For receiving these voice orders, it is provided a microphone 62. So, the interface circuit 44 is replaced by a voice synthesizer 44' and the interface circuit 50 by a voice analyzer 50'.

The working of the apparatus is the following.

5           When the optical disc is inserted in the drive 42, the command file 29 is read so that the user by pushing a button of the remote control or one of those on the apparatus, accesses to his mail. The content of the mail is displayed on the screen of the TV apparatus 20 and it is stored in the optical disc.

10           By the measures of the invention, it becomes possible to prepare an email on a disk. This email is only sent when the storage means is placed in an internet-connected apparatus. Then the advantage of this is that the users can access their email on any device that are able to handle the storage medium. It becomes possible for the users to easily archive their email, just by placing the storage medium in a safe place opens up email (archiving) as an application for optical storage. Also apparatus that do not have an Internet  
15           connection can be used to read archived email and to prepare emails for sending later.

          So the removable storage contains the necessary contact information (location of e-mail server password).

          The scope of the invention covers the apparatus, which are not able to be connected to the mail server, but have the possibilities to read and write mails in the  
20           removable storage means, so it can be temporarily disconnected from the Internet (e.g. when on the move), and later connected.

## CLAIMS.

- 1- An electronic mail system comprising at least:
  - an apparatus having a device to be connected to an electronic mail service, apparatus comprising:
    - a receptacle for receiving a removable data storing means,
    - writing/reading means for reading and/or writing storing means,
    - connecting means for a connection to a mail service,
    - mail managing means for managing mail,
 system further comprising
  - a removable data storing means.
- 2- A mail system as claimed in claim 1 comprising mail means for storing in said removable data storing means a least a part of the content of the mail.
- 3- A mail system as claimed in one claim of the claims 1 and 2 comprising archiving means for archiving the mail in a file in said removable data storing means.
- 4- A mail system as claimed in one claim of the claims 1 to 3, wherein said removable data storing means are constituted by an optical disc.
- 5- A mail system as claimed in one claim of claims 1 to 4 wherein the mail server is accessible via a network like Internet.
- 6- An apparatus suitable for electronic mail comprising:
  - a device to be connected to an electronic mail service,
  - a receptacle for receiving a removable data storing means,
  - writing/reading means for reading and/or writing storing means,
  - connecting means for a connection to a mail service,
  - mail managing means for managing mail.
- 7- A removable data storing means suitable for an apparatus as claimed in one claim of claim 1 to 6 in which data concerning mail are stored.
- 8- A removable data storing means suitable for an apparatus as claimed in one claim of claim 1 to 6 in which data concerning archive of mail are stored.
- 9- A removable data storing means suitable for an apparatus as claimed in one claim of claims 1 to 5 in which data concerning mail and archive of mail are stored.

10- A removable data storing means as claimed in one claim of claims 7 and 8 comprising a file for configuring the apparatus for the managing of the mail.

11- An apparatus suitable for a system as claimed in one of the claims 1 to 5 and for a removable data storing means as claimed in claim 9, comprising configuring means for configuring said apparatus for mail managing by launching said configuring file.

12- A mail system as claimed in one claim of claims 1 to 5, wherein mail managing means for managing mail comprise display means for managing the mail

13- A mail system as claimed in one claim of claims 1 to 5, wherein mail managing means for managing mail comprises sound means for managing the mail

- 10 14- A method for managing mail, which involves the following steps of:
- using a first apparatus which comprises:
    - a receptacle for a removable data storing means,
    - writing/reading means for reading and/or writing said storing means,
    - connecting means for a connection to a mail service,
    - mail managing means for managing mail for which the removable data storing means is involved,
  - inserting a removable data storing means,
  - connecting to mail server,
  - storing at least a part of the contain of the mail in said removable storing means,
  - removing removable storing means for being used with a second or the first apparatus.
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- 20

ELECTRONIC MAIL SYSTEM, APPARATUS AND REMOVABLE STORAGE MEANS SUITABLE  
FOR SUCH A SYSTEM.

ABSTRACT.

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This electronic mail system comprises an apparatus (1) having a device for a connection to an electronic mail service (18) in Internet world. The apparatus (1) comprises a drive (42) for an optical disc (5), which has the facility for writing/reading this optical disc. The disc can contain the mail and its archives. It is possible to manage the mail with various apparatus even they have no provision for an internet connection.

Fig.1



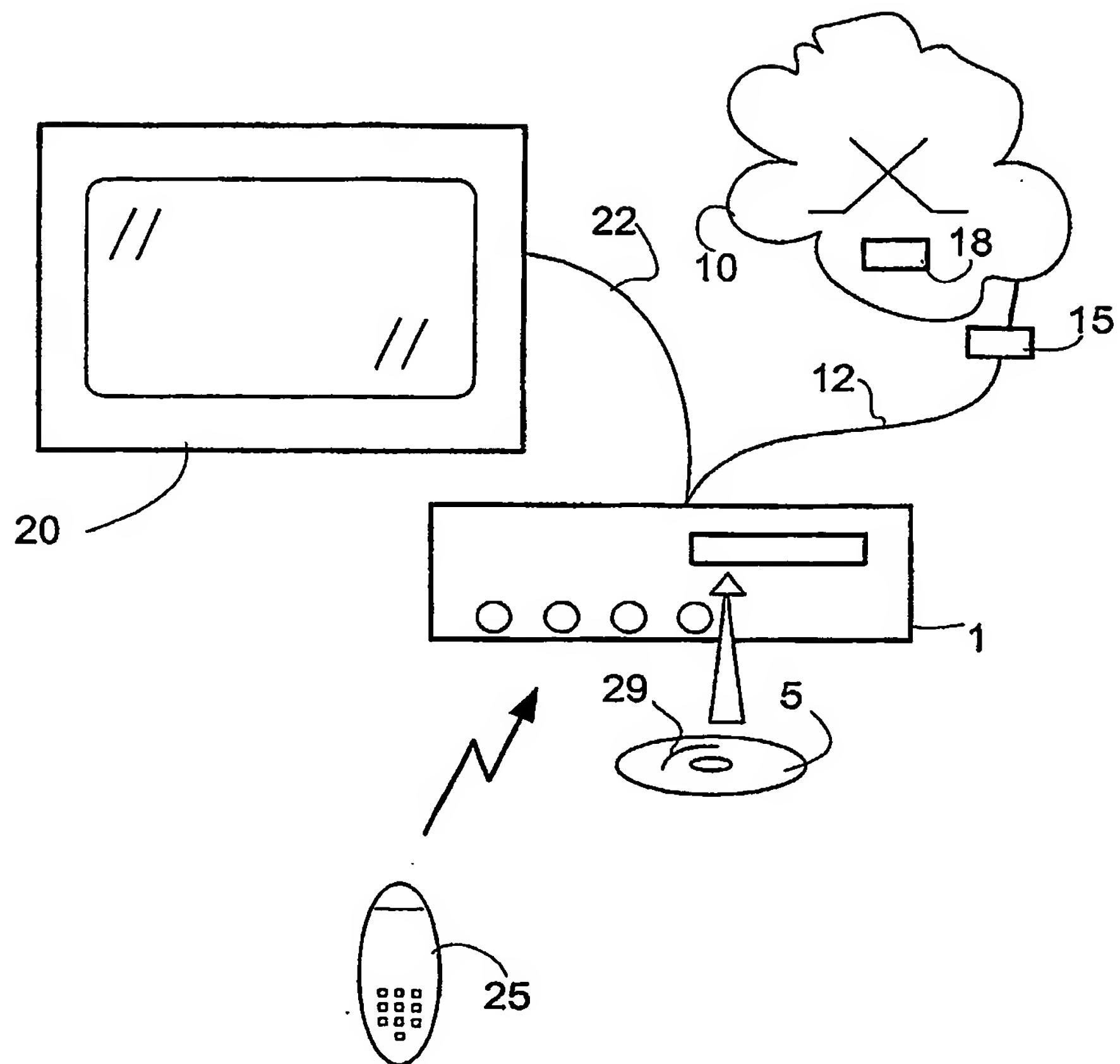


FIG.1

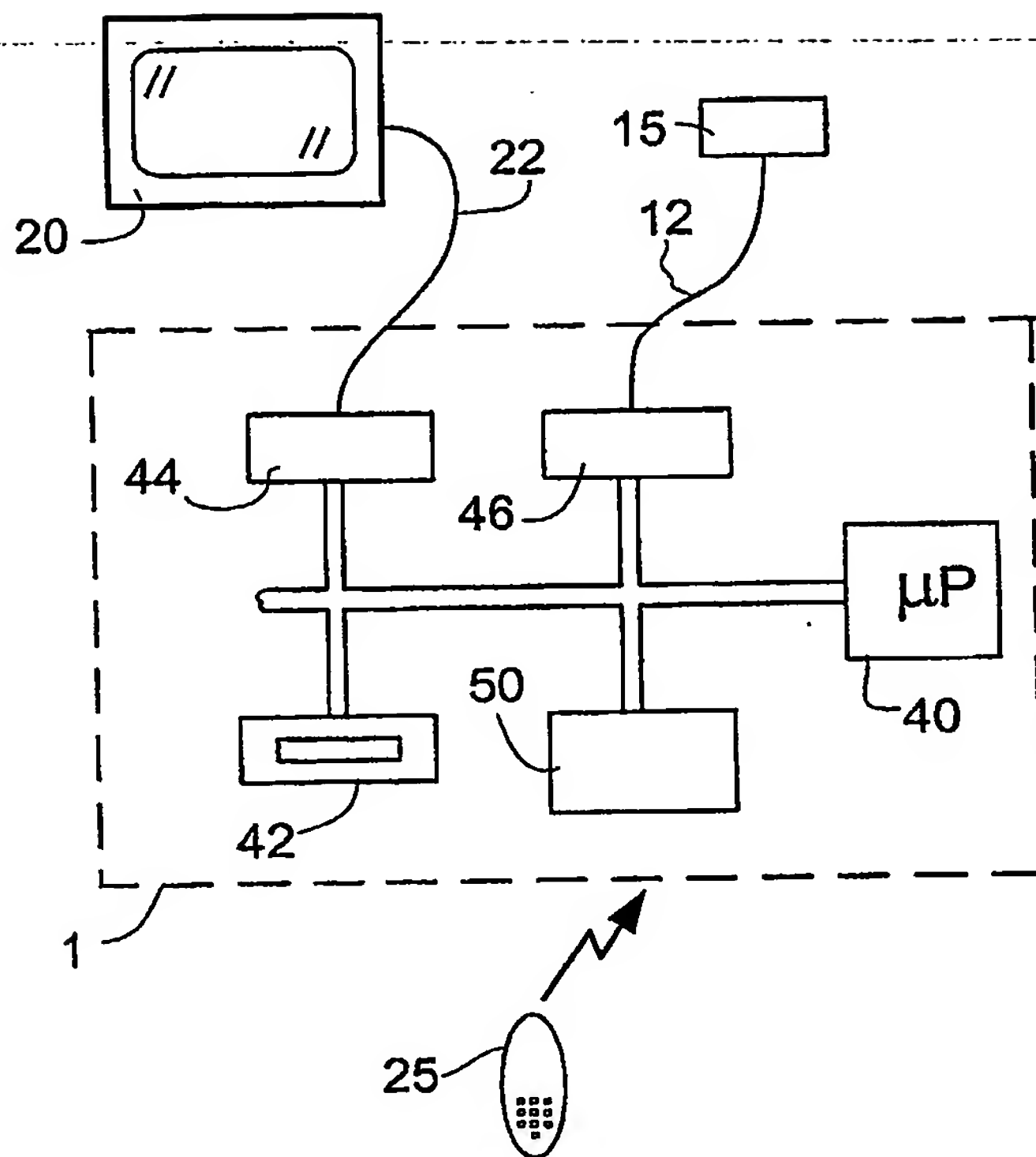


FIG.2

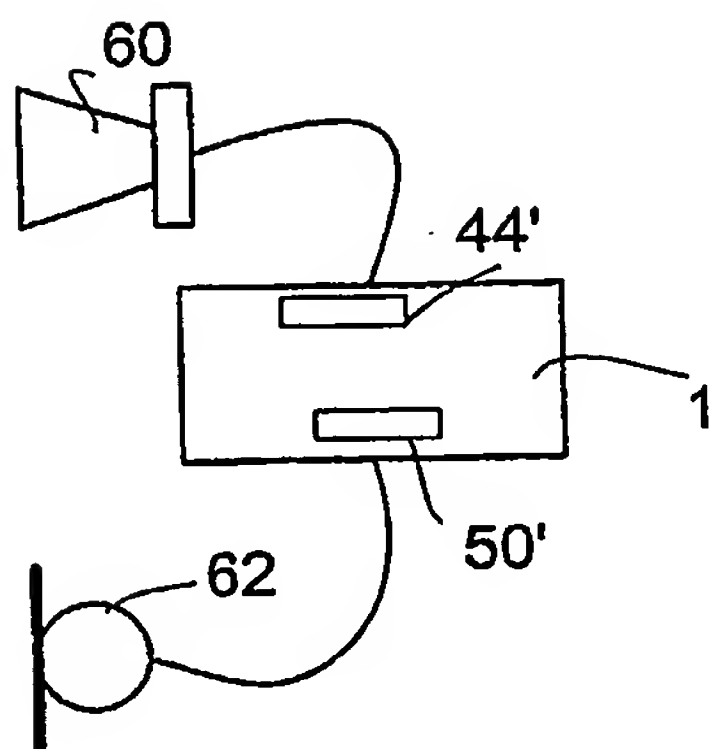


FIG.3

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